MESSAGE FROM LOK SABHA

The Khadi and Village Industries Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2006.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report to the House the following message received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha:

> "In accordance with the provisions of rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose the Khadi and Village Industries Commission (Amendment) Bill, 2006, as passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 27th February, 2006."

Sir, I lay a copy of the Bill on the Table.

MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION

Racial discrimination against Indians in U.S.A.

SHRIMATI N.R DURGA (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the hon. Prime Minister to the problems that the Indian software engineers, particularly from Andhra Pradesh, are facing in the USA. *...(Interruptions)...*

श्री दिग्विजय सिंह (झारखंड) **:** गृह मंत्री जी, आप कृपया दो मिनट बैठिए। एक सवाल हैं।

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, I have two Bills in the Lok Sabha. I was told that I should be there.

SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Many reports have appeared in a section of the media. I have seen on television that a lady by the name Tirumalasetti Neelima from Andhra Pradesh, who is working fora company called Care Mark, had filed a case before the Federal Court in Texas stating -that the authorities are harassing her inspite of knowing that she is pregnant. It is the most inhuman treatment meted out to a pregnant woman. Apart from this, the USA has refused visas to our leading scientists such as Dr. Govardhan Mehta of HSc, Dr. Rodriguez of Indira Gandhi Atomic Energy Centre and Mr. PC. Kesavan of Dr. Swaminathan Research Centre. The House is concerned about it. So, I request the hon. Prime Minister to convey the concerns of this House with regard to the racial discrimination

against the Indians in the USA, particularly this case, to Mr. Bush who is coming to India and ask him to do the needful. Thank you.

SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT (West Bengal): Sir, I associate myself with what Shrimati N.P. Durga has stated.

Marketing problems of cotton growing farmers in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

SHRI PENUMALLI MADHU (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, the Cotton Corporation of India has slowed down its purchasing in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Commotion is brewing there and the farmers are very agitated. I visited Nandigama CCI purchasing centre in the district Krishna on 24th February. Since 12th February, not even a single quintal of cotton has been purchased. As per the guidelines, farmers are to be paid the money within 15 days of the purchasing. But even after a month, they have not been paid anything. Approximately, a stock of 14,000 quintals of cotton has piled up in the market. Nearly, 1,000 farmers are desperately waiting to dispose of their stocks in the market for the last 15 days. I have found that for the farmers selling the produce has become more difficult task than cultivation. The entire local press narrated so many stories about the difficulties of farmers in the market. Now, after 15 days, the farmers desperately want to dispose of their stocks at any price. The supporting price announced by the Government of India is Rs. 2,010/-per quintal. But the CCI is purchasing tie best quality only at Rs. 1,954/. The lowest price paid to the farmer is only Rs. 1,704/-.

Sir, just four days before my visit, one poor farmer, Shaik Moulali, committed suicide near Kancikicharla. Another farmer Shaik Mahaboob's 10 acres of land was auctioned on 22nd February. His cotton is in the market, but the land has been auctioned. Like that, many such stories can be heard. Sir, through you, I request the Government of India and the Minister of Agriculture to intervene in the matter and see to it that the CCI is actively involved in the purchasing of cotton. Thank You.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I associate myself with this issue.

DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, I also associate myself with this issue.

SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): Sir, it is a very important issue. I also associate myself with this issue.